Unity of Power and Unity of Disease

Standing upon the Globe and contemplating the World with wisdom, Man beholds in every variety of appearance, something which impresses him. He smells the odours of the Rose, by the impelling fragrance of its particles. He touches it, by the soft resistance it gives to his fingers. He sees it, by the rays of beauty which it rebounds to him; & he hears, by the Bird that drinks its Nectar, and agitates the Air with Melody. Thus situated he would say; this World is Matter, but this Matter is POWER. He would speak an eternal truth.

Whatever Men know respecting Matter, is through the effects it produces. As an adequate Cause, there is no logical rights to suspect anything independent of it. The Substratum of the Ancient Schools, was empty Phraseology. This enlightened Era does not deal in Nonentities. It is high time, to strip Science of Sophistry and Chimera, & exhibit her, simple and unencumbered. Matter, Power, nay Excitability too, are to be viewed as terms of one import.

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In all matter there is a Power to act, under some condition. Excitability it will appear is but this Power. It puts on different appearances as it is differently modified. Such modification does not change the essence of Power, it only changes its objects. The Power to act is an Unity. The Experiments of Chymistry prove all the variety of natural Bodies to be constituted, of a few elements. Yet they differ as absolutely from each other, as from their Elements. A celebrated Professor has ventured to suspect but two original Principles. He ought to have boldly gone one step farther and founded the analysis in One. Chymical changes imply a change of Power, or a conversion to some new object. It has no similarity to simple mixture. Every evidently different Body is a different appearance of the Professors original Elements. It is a conversion not a mixture of them. It is the multiform conversion of Power. These effects arise too, barely from accumulation. Is it more inconceivable, that by this means, one Element should produce these effects? If two can put on such numerous complexions why should it not

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avail with one. If Oxygen and a metallic base, did still exist under all the forms of Matter, it would be then true, that there could but be, at least two Elements. But every conversion they undergo, annihilates them. All the doubts that have arisen and will everlastingly arise, with respect to principles in Chymistry, may be imputed to the circumstance, that the full force of this law is difficult to be felt. It is so counter to superficial and common observation, that we find it hard to be sensible, that particles which unite, become extinct and have no part in the body newly formed.. It is on this account, that water among the Ancients was an Element, among the French Chymists a compound, and is now again likely to become an Element. In the truth, Water is but a form of Power. A change of circumstances converts it into something else, and another change reconverts it back to Water. As in the Galvanic Experiment, from one Wire we obtain Hydrogen and from the other Oxygen. Under one circumstance, the Water becomes Hydrogen and under another Oxygen. This experiment is

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to be only explained by the Law of Conversion. It is thus that we are to explain the total distinction between Atmospheric air, Nitrous Gas, nitrous Oxyd, nitrous acid and Nitric acid. These are substances that spring from the same principles, thus differently converted, by accumulation to different destinations. It is the multiplicious Conversion of Power. It is the manyformed Presentation of one indivisible something. In all the gradation of Being we are to suspect nothing beyond this Unity despised and fitted to delude. We are to behold these changes as connected with the end, the destination of Power, not Power itself. How such wonders are effected it is for man to be ignorant and content. How the cold Stone is converted into the warmth of Caloric, How the dark Phosphorus is converted into the dazzling Blaze, How the smooth fluid puts on the rough visage of the Rock and the tasteless substance, becomes metamorphosed into an object of pleasure to the Palate, it is for the proud Science of allotality, to crouch in ignorance. It is beautiful to follow through

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all the chain of Being the gradual growth of Perfection, the more extensive Compounds or Conversions, the various conversions and the innumerable Associations of Power. To trace its progress from the insulated Element, to the Mineral, to the Vegetable, and to the Animal Frame. And to reflect, that in this lengthy view, the eye beholds the same Actor in ~~every variety of Appearance~~ all the Characters exhibited. Such is the slow and intricate ascent of Power from what has been termed Inanimation to Life, to Locomotion and to Thought; that the Perception of Man discerns no limits between them; Like the Colors of the Rainbow, they vanish in intermingling radiances. Let none startle at the Assertion that Life is founded in Matter, since Matter is Power. The whole Universe Quickens to the Eternal Cause. Not only Man, but the Grass of the Field and the Earth on which it flourishes. They are all Power to act. They are dead or inert only under particular circumstances. Oxygen is without Motion unless it be brought into contact with Subst.

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substance or Power of some Kind. It then exerts itself or evinces life. This Cause of exertion is to be called a Stimulus. The Mineral, the Vegetable and Animal have their peculiar Stimuli as they have their peculiar structure and modification of Power. The human Frame is an arrangement, of different modifications, as it differs in its component parts. Such arrangements does not destroy the intrinsic Character of Power. It only varies its direction. It will still require its Stimulus, to the production of action. This, the Professor of Medicine has satisfactorily proved. Nor in this state of Mechanism do the ultimately known indications of Power, forsake it. It still retains its impenetrability, Attraction and Repulsion. These are doubtless peculiar to itself. But they are nevertheless the effects of Power. The animal Fibre is perhaps the result of a long course of conversions. The last of these is the Coopération of the blood and nervous fluids. I conclude so because they are each necessary to life. Because when the blood is shut out from a part, it dies, and when it has most easy and plenteous access according to the character of the part there

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most Life is exhibited. Because a part has more or less of action or approaches more or less to death, as there is greater or less influx of nervous fluid into it. Because all Capability to Motion in the body is lost by cutting off its intercourse with the Brain. Because of the Phenomena attending Palsy, in which vitality will not be lost: but there will be no sensibility. Because the finer Senses have a more liberal supply of Nerves. Finally, I conclude so from the effects of Volition, which arise from the greater and sudden influx of nervous fluid, and the action of the ordinary Stimulus upon it. The Blood, most probably affords the gross Materials. But the Animation is proportionate with the quantity of nervous energy given to the union. This Energy is the Spirit which urges the Clay into susceptibility and fitness for Motion. From the Blood is endowed with its subtle influence. All Slumber has established the vitality of this fluid. This vitality is dependant upon contact of the fluid with the solids. The solids cannot live without contact with the fluid, because they obtain from it supplies to support their motions. Because it imparts something to them. So the fluid cannot

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ive without contact with the Solids, because it receives something from them. That something is the vitalizing Principle. It is that which all other parts of the Body require to animate them. The Animal Fibre thus constructed to form a Power Sui Generis, is various as it is employed in the fabrication of the different organs. Whether this variety originates in different proportions of the Constituent bases, or dissimilarity of Arrangement or both, will appear on reflection upon its Characters and Phenomena. The human Body has been happily termed a Microcosm. It has muscles, Bone and Intellect to procure food and replenishment to its vessels. It has vessels to repay, they good deed. It supports in turn, the muscles, bone and Intellect. Hence like the Planetary System, Life moves in an Orbit. It exists by motion in a Round. Such motion is the conjunct operation of all its parts. Every organ has its allotment of duties and requires the strictest punctuality of function from the rest. Thus they are intimately bound together. There can be no local defect which does not propagate a general influence. No action, of which there is not a universal Cognizance. Like men, it would seem they exercise a moral Criticism

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upon derelictions of right. This alliance, however, is indirect. There is another still more important. It consists in an immediate interchange of affections. Food taken into the Stomach, transmits, instantly, a fulness throughout the system. If the Heart be inordinately roused, it becomes a Centre whence rays of motion emanate and diffuse themselves everywhere. If such be the State of the Brain, of the Liver, of the Kidneys, such will be the State of all other parts. Activity hastens from fibre to fibre, and they pervade the whole. Each fibre receives an impulse from its contiguous fibre and again imparts one. So also when motions which have been usually evolved, are withdrawn, or diminished in force, there is a common diminution every where. A wonderful refinement of Power indeed! But not more so than many other shapes of it, which because more accustomed to them, are less admired. Motion, they diffused carry along with them the Character of their Original. I conclude so from the following reason. Sensation is but a higher degree of Irritation, or an irritation of so much force as to reach the point of Consciousness. The seat of Sensation is the brain. The brain is made up

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of materials which compose the rest of the Body. Now it is certain that motions in the brain have a stamp corresponding to their Cause. An Idea is the Image of its Original. These motions in the Brain are derived from motions through other portions of the Body. Such portions must also recognize a distinction. This distinction is founded in form combined with force, but more especially in form. This is various beyond calculation. As various as the unlikeness of modification and arrangement of Power. The origin of these motions it has been said is (Power acting) upon Power or Stimulus acting upon Excitability according to the Phraseology of Brown. They spring from a conflict by impenetrability. It is the Quality of Impenetrability which finally in all cases gives birth to them. There are two kinds of Attraction and Repulsion or Attraction and Repulsion at sensible and insensible distances. They are the evidences of connected Power by a change of circumstances. Caloric premous to its production in a body. ~~Bar~~ is but a part of that body and ~~but~~ but the Repulsive Power of its Particles. But after its production, it acquires a Force of Repulsion which is unchange

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-nable. When a Solid becomes Fluid its particles acquire a pro-
-digious increase of Repulsion. & to two Bodies can be brought
into actual Contact. There is a Power of Repulsion which for-
-bids it. A Magnet may be made by rubbing two pieces of
iron together. The Power of Repulsion thus acquired is but an
increment of that which already existed among the parti-
cles. All Repulsion is therefore the same, differing only as
to limits. Differing only by new modification. This Reason
-ing may be also used, to prove the identity of Attraction,
changed only, as to limit by modification. They all im-
-part motion by impenetrability. I conclude so with respe-
-ct to Attraction, because, when it is brought into Action
in a part, it would cease to exert itself was there no Obstacle
When chymical particles combine, their affinity becomes
extinct as do they themselves. So that the Obstacle in the
part which resists the Union, together with the Attraction
of the part, gives rise to the action of impenetrability. Hence
motions of peculiar stamp. The part itself as it is made up
of different shapes of Power will irregularly exert an Affin-

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-ity. This inequality will constitute the difference of form. Thus all the attractions and Repulsions act directly by impenetrability. The impressions produced in any of these ways are proportionate with the force which produces them. So far it appears that all Stimuli act alike. I hope to prove that in all cases they are to be considered as units. All different parts of the Body are so many distinct presentations of the compounded blood and nervous fluid. They are different arrangements and Proportions. It is perceptible in the ~~blood~~ Liver, Kidney, Brain, Cartilage, Ligament, Tendon, Muscle. The Interstices between the fibres and minute parts of the fibres must consequently have different dimensions and configuration. As Particles or Motions which are to be considered one, deviate from a correspondence with the these, so shall there be more or less of compression. Certain motions in passing through the System, by this means become entangled, in certain parts; while others of greater force make their pervasions without difficulty. Certain other motions again, by the same means become entangled in other parts, and penetrate

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the former with facility. Hence all the motions of part-icular character may affect the whole system; yet such af-fection is very unequally distributed. It is by this means Cantharides determines to the urinary Organs. That Laudanum aims its strength principally at the brain. That Mercury ex-cites the salivary Glands. It is true these effects will not always take place from their appropriate Stimuli. Ban--ations will occur, from the differently excitable State of the ~~part~~ Organs... From what has been said we are now competent to account for the singular Phenomenon of A-daptation. A Stimulus which shall strongly actuate the Stomach shall produce little effect upon the Rectum; While another not a degree superior in Power shall pro-duce great effect upon the Rectum and little upon the Stomach. This because there is a fitness and unfitness be--tween the Stimuli and Arrangement of the parts. That is between the forms of the Stimuli and the Channels of the parts through which they have to pass, or rather through which their motions pass. It has been said that Stimuli produced their effects by mechanical act-ion. When a fibre becomes thus affected it is necessarily

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in a state of compression. Its bulk is contracted. Its tether of action is confined. It had a Power proportional to its bulk, which is brought into a smaller compass with every contraction of that bulk. If a fibre be one inch long, it must have one inch of Power. If by compression its length dimin-ish to eleven lines it will then expend itself in eleven lines. That is, twelve lines of Power will expend itself in eleven lines. Its force being thus concentrated, it will of course evince a proportionate increase of action. Its tendency is again to restore the original dimensions of the fibre. If this be im-practicable it will affect it by unhinging and displac-ing its particles. The particular Agent in this Process Agent in this process, is probably a repulsive power of par-ticular extent, among the particles themselves. The fibre is now literally relaxed. It has been broken. This will be more or less according to the degree of compression and its resistance. The compression may be such as to const-itute a state of prostration or extreme laxity. Like an over loaded gun, the fibre may be shattered by an overcharge. It may be such as only to lock up the Power, to suspend

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its ~~M~~ actions. Each particle may be considered a particle of power. Any great compaction of these, might therefore be such, as to leave no space for their exertion. This is the suffocat-ed excitement of Authors. It may be produced by a sudden blow upon the head. The remedy, is to afford that space for action, which has been occupied by the stimulus and its motions. When the fibre by compression has been thus broken, its force of action will of course measurably dimin-ish. Such diminution is always accompanied with a prop-ortionate diminution of waste in the part. There is less ex-penditure of nervous fluid. There is consequently an accu-mulation of it, (unless indeed the brain has been debilitated. In this case genuine Lypthes would be established) Hence the superproportionate combination of the fluid, will always bear a Ratio to the degree of Laxity produced. It has been shown that the fibre is capable of combining with different doses of nervous fluid. It has been shown that its mobility arises from this quarter. We conclude con-secutively therefore, that it is to this Source, we are to ~~the~~ look, for that increment of irritability and Sensibi-lity

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that attend a state of Laxity. When the fibre becomes thus contracted it is said to have arrived at the ~~state~~ point of indirect Debility, or increased Excitability... A certain degree of motion, is necessary to the vigor of the of the human body. On this account there should be a degree of compression constantly present. On this account it is, that vital heat is of such immense consequence. On this account it is that a constant flow of action from the integumental Canal, throughout the system, gives such facility to the functions. And hence the importance of of a certain quantum of fluid in the vessels. Any alteration of these is an alteration of compression and a cause of Laxity, a cause of accumulated nervous mobility. A tendency to rest, is a tendency to death; To decomposition; To a loss of Adhesion in the particles of the fibre. It would seem that, like the Pneumiant, Life can support itself only by moving forward. It would seem that Animal matter continued sound and undiminished, by feeding upon its own vitals. In this state we have the direct Debility, but still the increased Excitability. An Ex ample in point, is to be had in the frozen Subject. It is generally found with its bloodvessels ruptured, and its blood extravasated.. When these Debilities, which are the Same, have been induced by negative and positive Causes, they form a

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Basis for the establishment of Disease or Morbid Action. The morbid Action is Convulsion. I conclude so, because violent Passions which rouse the brain to increased Secretions of nervous fluid, produce Spasm. Because Hysteria which is accompanied by great Irritability, is attended with Spasm. Because upon the relief of Apoplexy, and the restoration of the ordinary transmission of nervous fluid, Convulsions are exhibited. Because Syncope is sometimes concluded by Convulsions. Because Spasm is cured by medicines that still the action of the Brain and thus cut off the root of the evil. And lastly and emphatically, because the fibre in its loosened Conditions is incapable, but by a fictitious Power, to make a great exertion. Dr. Rush has defined Fever in convulsive action of the bloodvessels. I have no doubt upon the subject. The transient action, the nervous jerking is evident to the touch. But it constitutes not only Disease of the Bloodvessels. In whatever part of the Body it may occur, it is still this convulsive action. Whether it be general, general and local, or local localized, it is still Convulsion. Because the Basis to Disease in the other parts of the System is the same, and because frequent translations take place

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from the Bloodvessels to those parts... There is a Faculty in the System, by which, it becomes accommodated to Stimulants, and they loses its sensibility to their impressions. This effect is brought on by gradual steps and in the most mechanical manner. The fibres acquire a high degree of facility in yielding to the pressure made upon them. Their Particles change their position, according to the exigency of the case. Thus they become more pliable and admit of less compression. It is by this means that Tobacco loses its narcotic property. That ardent Spirit becomes less intoxicating after moderate and repeated use. It is by this means that a Child acquires a ready use of its limbs & promptly performs the voluntary motions. It is thus that frequent dancing produces an easy gracefulness and much practice in writing renders the fingers astonishingly alert, in describing every variety of figure. It is thus, that a Bullet, lodged in the body, changes its position, even to distant parts, without exciting a consciousness of its motions. It is thus, that Hydrocephalus Internus expands the brain and Cranium ~~by~~ without occasioning any inconvenience frequently; while the slightest pressure upon the brain, suddenly applied, produces Coma.

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To explain the ~~the~~ motions of Sympathy, to trace them from their origin to their termination, is a task, indispensible to any purpose, tho difficult to accomplish. The Subject has been greatly wrapt up in mystery. Its very name embraces Mystery. It has been borrowed from an operation of the Mind to which it has no philosophical analogy. In speaking of one part sympathizing with another, it would seem that we had allusion, to one Spirit suffering for another, compassionating its miseries, at a distance. It is however, the lot of Intellect alone, to render Pity; to melt in the Perfection of Charity. When a part labors under Disease and motions of Irritation ~~which~~ ~~of the~~ are in consequence established in another part we may very judiciously assume, our opinion ~~is had~~ was not effected by preternatural Agency; or the hands of Mab the Fairy Queen. Rather let us rationally suppose, that they were communicated by the intermediate fibres. That in the part said to ~~sym~~ sympathize, or in the motions communicated, the Cause is to be sought for. It may be owing to the form of the motions and the Principle of Adaptation, as already elucidated. It may be owing to Laxity in the part sympathizing, by which, it acquires decay; by the too Stimulating motions, of the Sympa-

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thant.; or it may be owing to the abstraction of action from the Sympathizer by the Sympathant, thus creating Lassitude directly and Lassitude indirectly. Or it may be owing to the superior facility of intercourse between the Sympathant, and the Sympathizer. It is by this last mode that continuous Sympathy is performed. It is by this mode that Cathartics taken into the Stomach, sometimes immediately affect the whole Intestinal Canal and procure an evacuation. It is by this means that a Stone in the Kidney irritates and retracts the Testis and produces an itching at the Glans Penis. It is thus we have factitious Sympathies. Parts which usually cooperate, form a Unison of motions; so that whenever they are excited in either, the other becomes affected also. This easy intercommunion, no doubt, arises from the faculty of ~~Habitude~~ Habitude. The motions pass most readily, where they find least resistance. It is on this account that the eyes sympathize with each other, that the arms and lower Extremities sympathize with their Fellows. The eyes constantly cooperate. Their motions constantly intermingle. So that the parts intervening, become more pliable and more susceptible forming a kind of channel. Such also are the circumstances of the

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Testicles and Kidneys and all the Bugbear Sympathies of the Body. It is by this extension of motion to distant points, that we sometimes have effects, that are equally alarming and unexpected. We may have motions that, altho innocent at their Origin, at length after having produced a chain of sympathies, implicating the vital Organs, constitute a Disease, dangerous and obscure. Such motions are however in no wise different from those, that originate immediately under the impulse of stimulants. Indeed, they are the effects of Stimulants, since motions are rarely such. Much dispute has arisen with respect to the medium, by which, Sympathies are produced. This is a matter of very little consequence. All the soft Solids have the ability, because they all spring from the same source. From this exposition of Sympathy, Inanitation appears to be intimately allied to it. From some things already established this Power of the animal Machine is to be handsomely unfolded. When Disease is abstracted either wholly or in part from one quarter of the Body to another, there must have been a cause. That Cause is Laxity or increased Excitability. I conclude so because the Gout is found to recede from

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the foot to the Stomach by, excessively debilitating remedies; and again to return ~~to the~~ by invigorating the action of the Stomach. This may be said of Erysipelas also, receding from the skin to the Intestines and such also of Rash. This laxity or Debility of increased excitability is the Cause of translation, tho not directly. The direct Cause is the disease, of which it is the Basis. It has been already said that any inordinate excitement, produced an inordinate Waste of nervous fluid. This fluid has been demonstrated to be a Source of action. If therefore a Disease exists, it exists by the sustenance it here receives. If the Brain secrete 100 measures of nervous fluid, for this exclusive Sustenance; it will follow of course, that the more numerously divided the Disease is, the smaller must be the Supply ~~to each of~~ of these 100 measures, to each Division. The more numerous the Wastegates, the less consequently will be the force of fluid passing through to each. Hence it is that we obtain so much Benefit from Blisters. They are, like a Bloodletting from the very interstices of the part itself: they are to be applied as near to the part diseased as possible. Because, in this case they will attract more fluid from that than from any other

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individual part of the System. They should also when practicable, be applied contiguous to the nerves which supply the part diseased, since their transmitting Power will be thus relieved, by abstracting so much of their own vitality. It is upon this Theory of Translation, that we are competent to account for the Debility in the Muscles during Fever. The exorbitant waste of the Bloodvessels abstracts from them their usual supply of nervous Fluid. The Blister acts with regard to the nervous energy, as the Lancet does with regard to the Blood. I might go on to explain further the circumstances which render this Remedy proper or improper. But Logic and Patience forbid it.

The Object of this brief Survey of some of the most eminent features of the human Fabric, is to prove the Unity of Disease. The Irritability has been shown to be Power pervading all Nature, the Essence of Action. It has been shown to vary by modifications, or the acquirement of different Qualities. It has been ~~shown~~ glancingly pursued from the simple Element to the animal Compound.

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these modifications have been shown to spring from a change of circumstances. They depend upon certain contingencies for existence. when these are withdrawn they become changed or die. Death in the human Body is nothing more than a transformation of Power. It is but an abstraction of those particular presentations, by which it is actuated to maintain the Integrity of the Frame, and to support the Phenomena of Animal Life. In short, it has been shown, that Life is but the evidence of a peculiar form of Power. The mode by which the Causes operate which actuate this modification of Power has been illustrated and the Nature of the Operations particularly developed. From which it was shown that motion was necessary to life. How motions became too vigorous or not enough so. What were the consequences of this and in what manner they were brought about. From which it was shown, the production of Laxity in any part of the System. The production of Disease from it, and the nature of action which constitutes that Disease. It was shown, that this action is convulsive and is the same in all parts of the

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System. From which it was shown that the faculty of Sympathy, of Translation, Habituation and Adaptation to particular Stimuli, were founded in plain mechanical impulse. That the Excitability is notwithstanding a Unit, not only with respect to itself, but with respect likewise to the Operation of Stimuli. That the Stimulus is to be viewed as Unity in relation to the Excitability, since its effects vary, only as to their seat. These effects when diseased, have been shown to consist in Laxity, Mobility and Convulsion. It is only by these that Disease is constituted. These are its composing Principles. Accidental Appearances may frequently cast a shadow over it, and render its True and simple structure obscure. But the discerning Eye, will not fail, for the most part, to pierce through and recognise it. Finally we are to conclude the Singleness of Disease 1st. From the full refutation of the Objection that there are more Stimuli than one. From which it was alledged that Variety of Cause would produce variety of effect. That variety of Stimulus acting upon variety of Excitability would produce variety of Di-

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disease. using in fact the same Weapon, I conclude the unity of of Disease from the Unity of Stimulus and the unity of Excitability. 2d. From the Singleness of action which constitutes it..

In thus contributing to support a doctrine equally novel and interesting, I bear with me at least the best conviction. I could almost think I stand upon the ground of him who wars in the Battles of Liberty and Right. Like him I have a Bacash, which glows, under the elevating warmth of an Object, noble and desirable. And altho' I may not ch no arm of Nerve, the effort is nevertheless honorable. It is the only mode of exalting Medicine to the Rank of Science. It is the only mode of eradicating her from the hands of Quackery. It is the only mode of attaining to certainty and boldness in Practice. Has I no Principles to light up the dark ~~of the~~ mysteries of Disease, to guide me through his Labyrinthy of Pain and Complaint. I should curse the fatal moment that allotted me to witness the wretchedness of Men. It is on the day of perplexity, when the masked visage of scowling Maladies approaches

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that the Physician needs resources. Under such circumstances Principles render him calm, intrepid and skilful. It is in the hour of Peril, that the Physician needs ~~[illegible]~~ support. When the weeping Friend, the disconsolate Wife or the husband hanging with silent grief over the Object of his affection. It is here that Principles constitute him the Angel of Comfort. This is the moment of Triumph to the Unity of Disease to Principles in Medecine ....

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Virginia 3